

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

GODDARD ANNOUNCES AGREEMENT TO CURB TOBACCO SALES TO MINORS IN WAL-MART STORES

(PHOENIX, AZ—September 30, 2003) Attorney General Terry Goddard announced today that he and the Attorneys General of 42 other states have reached an agreement under which Wal-Mart will implement new policies and procedures to reduce tobacco sales to minors. The agreement will affect Wal-Mart stores throughout the nation, including all 53 Wal-Mart, SAM'S CLUB, and Supercenter stores in Arizona.

"I am committed to reducing underage smoking. Today's agreement is an important step designed to keep cigarettes out of children's hands," said Goddard.

The Wal-Mart "Assurance of Voluntary Compliance" is the most recent agreement produced by an ongoing, multi-state enforcement effort to get retailers to adopt policies and practices to prevent youth access to cigarettes and other tobacco products. The agreement requires Wal-Mart to:

- Train employees on state and local laws and company policies regarding tobacco sales to minors, including explaining the health-related reasons for laws that restrict youth access to tobacco.
- Check the ID of any person purchasing tobacco products when the person appears to be under age 27, and only accept currently valid government-issued photo identification as proof of age.
- Use cash registers programmed to prompt ID checks on all tobacco sales.
- Hire an independent entity to conduct random compliance checks of 325 Wal-Mart stores every six months.
- Display and store tobacco products in a manner that restricts access by minors.
- Prohibit the sale of smoking paraphernalia to minors.

The Attorneys General will monitor compliance with the agreement and have reserved the right to enforce future violations of the agreement as well as the laws governing sale of tobacco to minors.

Attorneys General have long recognized that youth access to tobacco products ranks among the most serious public health problems. Studies show that more than 80 percent of adult smokers began smoking before the age of 18. Research indicates that every day in the United States, about 2,000 people under the age of 18 begin smoking and that one-third of those persons will one day die from a tobacco-related disease. Young people are particularly susceptible to the hazards of tobacco, often showing signs of addiction after smoking only a few cigarettes.

The Arizona Attorney General has a Tobacco Enforcement Unit, which works with local law enforcement to enforce Arizona laws regarding the sale and marketing of tobacco products. The Tobacco Enforcement Unit also enforces the national Master Settlement Agreement (MSA), reached with tobacco companies in November 1998. Arizonans who suspect violations of state tobacco laws or the MSA are encouraged to call the Attorney General's Office at (602) 542-4853.